

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 101255Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2331

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 3817

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, JM, BB

SUBJECT: THE BARBADOS ELECTION - THE JAMAICAN VIEW

1. VICTORY OF BARBADOS LABOR PARTY (BLP) OVER THE
DEMOCRATIC
LABOUR PARTY (DLP) HAS RECEIVED WIDE PRESS AND EDITORIAL
COVERAGE IN JAMAICA. FOR THE MOST PART, REPORTS
HAVE CONCENTRATED ON FACTUAL REPORTING OF ELECTION OUTCOME
AND ANALYSES OF THE CHALLENGES FACING THE NEW GOVERNMENT.
JAMAICA'S LEADING PAPER, THE DAILY GLEANER, HIGHLIGHTED
BLP LEADET TOM ADAMS' REPUDIATION OF PRIME MINISTER
BARROWS'S CLAIM OF AMERICAN ATTEMPTS TO DESTABILIZE
BARBADOS. A "DAILY NEWS" EDITORIAL RECOUNTED THE
ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES FACING THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND
SPECULATED THAT ADAMS IS "COURTING US AND OTHER
METROPOLITAN SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY".

2. JAMAICAN LABOUR PARTY (JLP) OPPOSITION LEADER
SEAGA HAS MADE SOME POLITICAL HAY OUT OF THE ELECTION
RESULTS BY POINTING TO THE "STRONG POLITICAL
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SWING IN THE CARIBBEAN". SEAGA, REFLECTING HIS OWN

CONCERNS, COMMENDED PRIME MINISTER BARROW FOR HOLD-
ING "FREE ELECTIONS IN THE FACE OF THIS POLITICAL
SWING". HE ALSO USED THE ELECTION RESULTS TO POINT
OUT "HOW USELESS OPINION POLLS ARE IN PREDICTING
ELECTION RESULTS IN THE CARIBBEAN". (A "GLENER"
POLL OF SEPTEMBER 7 REACHED A "SPECULATIVE CONCLU-
SION THAT SEAGA'S JLP WOULD LOSE A CURRENT ELECTION
BY A 30-23 SEAT MARGIN.)

3. COMMENT: WHAT EFFECT, IF ANY, ADAMS' VICTORY
MAY HAVE ON THE JAMAICAN POLITICAL SCENE IS AT BEST
HARD TO DETERMINE. NEVERTHELESS, THE RESULTS ARE
REASSURING TO THE JOP, AND SEAGA IS CLEARLY TRYING
TO GET THE MOST MILEAGE POSSIBLE OUT OF THAT DEVELOP-
MENT. CONVERSELY, THE BARBADOS ELECTION IS VERY
LIKELY TO CAUSE RIPPLES OF CONCERN WITHIN THE PNP
AND A SOMEWHAT MORE CAUTIOUS ASSESSMENT OF THE
PARTY'S OWN ELECTION CHANCES WILL PROBABLY RESULT.
GERARD

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